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# FRIENDS OF SCIENCE

February 1985

Volume 4 Number 6



***The search for  
Sir John Franklin***

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Front cover: Joseph René Bellot Second - in - command.

### Canadian Explorers of Canada

Nearly every part of the world was first explored many centuries ago by aboriginal people. For the most part they did not keep any records or else these have been lost. In Canada both Inuit and Indians made maps on bark, skin or bone, which provided useful local guides and a few hundred have been preserved. The accuracy of some of these early maps was not at first appreciated. Usually they dealt with comparatively small areas and in most cases they were probably not made by the first humans to reach the areas depicted.

In the common use of the word exploration, therefore, is generally taken to mean exploration by Europeans, or in some cases Chinese, Arabs or other more recent explorers.

The Old World has records of travels that go back thousands of years, but even so one cannot say who first explored say Britain or Sicily.

On the other hand, the New World was not known to Europeans until the Vikings and later others brought back accounts. European explorers searched by the coastlines remarkably fast so that the coastlines of most countries, for example the United States,

were completely mapped by these travellers a few centuries ago. In consequence, the only coastlines which I can think of which were not mapped until this century, are parts of the polar regions in Canada, Greenland, and of course Antarctica. Apart from these the last major country to be thoroughly explored was the Soviet Union whose coasts and main rivers were remarkably well delineated by a series of great expeditions started about 1700 by Peter the Great and continued by his successors. Bering set out to look for America in 1741 because by that time the outlines of Siberia were well known.

As it happens the Canadian Arctic Islands are unusual in that some of them were first explored by travellers born in Canada itself. When we think of the exploration of Canada the names of Cabot, Cartier, Hudson, Baffin, Cook, Vancouver, and Parry come to mind. All of course were Europeans. The three Canadians whom I have been able to discover who first recorded parts of the Canadian coastline were Mrs. Jackie Manning (see newsletter April 1983) born in Nova Scotia, who

accompanied her English husband in 1939 and 1941 when they jointly discovered the Tweedsmuir Islands in the Foxe Basin north of Hudson Bay, Vilhjalmur Stefansson (see newsletter March 1983) born in Gimli, Manitoba who discovered several of the Arctic Islands, most of which he named after the members of Sir Robert Borden's Conservative Cabinet, that is Borden, Meighen, Perley and Loughheed islands. The third is William Kennedy of Saskatchewan. His life and activities are the subject of the accompanying article, researched and written by Jane Rowley, who is now on a scholarship from Canada to study at the University of Oxford.

By Dr. J. Tuzo Wilson

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No. Dr. Bertram



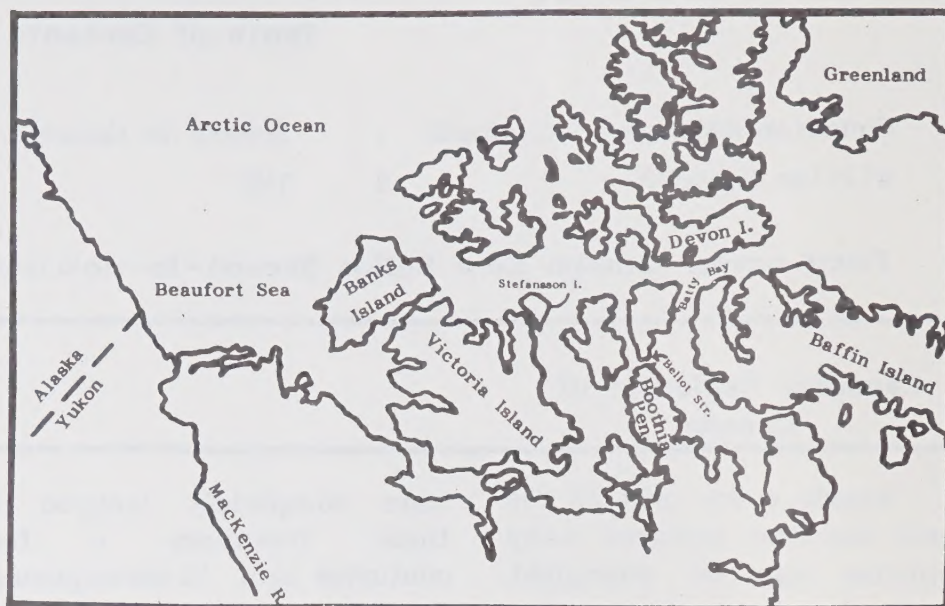
## WILLIAM KENNEDY

The Canadian Arctic was explored by a small number of very dedicated people, who were willing to forego the comforts of their home for the hardships of the Canadian North. The majority of these explorers were of European origin. Those who were native Canadians can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Of this select group, a man who has not received the recognition that he deserves is William Kennedy, captain of one of the ships involved in the search for Sir John Franklin.

Sir John Franklin and one hundred and thirty-three officers and men sailed for Greenhithe on 19 May 1845 in H.M.S. Erebus and Terror to search for the North-West Passage. It was the largest and best-equipped expedition ever sent to the north and was not expected to fail. The ships were last seen near the entrance to Lancaster Sound at the end of July 1845 by Captain Martin of the whaling-ship Enterprise.

As year after year passed without the ships appearing either in the Pacific or Atlantic, concern mounted throughout Britain and a number of expeditions were dispatched by the Admiralty to search for the missing ships, but without success. Sir John Franklin's wife petitioned the Admiralty to continue to search and also spent her own time and money in organizing private expeditions.

It was in 1850, after hearing of the loss of Sir John Franklin's expedition that William Kennedy, a Canadian Métis, volunteered his services to Lady Franklin. She offered him the command of her second private



expedition, a somewhat surprising choice as Kennedy had had very little sea-faring experience. Lady Franklin's selection must have been greatly influenced by his strong moral character and his knowledge of travelling in northern Canada.

William Kennedy had been born in 1814 at Cumberland House, an important Hudson's Bay Company post in Saskatchewan. His father was the Chief Factor of the post and his mother was a Swampy Cree Indian. Up to his eleventh birthday he accompanied his father and mother on transfers between posts. At this age, he was judged by his father to be old enough to go away to school. He sent William to Orkney Islands where he remained for seven years; at eighteen he returned to the Canadas and joined the Hudson's Bay Company for whom he worked, travelling extensively until 1846. At this time his high moral standards forced him to resign as he could not agree with the practice of allowing liquor to be sold to the Indians. He also objected strongly to the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company in

Rupert'sland, and soon began to lobby against it. This cause remained dear to his heart and upon his return from his arctic expeditions he renewed the crusade.

Kennedy was given command of the Prince Albert, an eighty-nine ton wooden vessel which had already been used in the search. He described the ship as "a small fairy-looking craft, which might have been taken for a yacht, or pleasure boat" (Kennedy, 1853, p.27). The crew of the Prince Albert numbered eighteen, including the Captain. The men, apart from the second-in-command were chosen for their previous experience in the Canadian North, and included Mr. John Hepburn, then in his sixties, who had accompanied Franklin on his first expedition in the North. Upon learning of the loss of Franklin, Hepburn had returned from Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) as quickly as possible so that he could show his devotion to his old captain. The second-in-command was Lieutenant Joseph René Bellot, on leave from the French Navy, who provided the seamanship badly needed



and had also been selected by Lady Franklin as a devoted volunteer. Bellot wrote: After having been witness of that noble grief -- of that indefatigable perseverance, which allowed Lady Franklin no -- rest, no repose, I feel that I would have gone on with my eyes closed. Such incessant devotion would inspire the deepest sympathy in any man. (Bellot, 1955, Vol. 2, p.362).

In his captain, Bellot found a man after his own heart. He had left his business in Canada without pay to command the expedition, despite the objections of his family who did not understand his "disinterested zeal". William Kennedy's reason for volunteering for the expedition may perhaps be traced back to 1819 when Sir John Franklin arrived by canoe at Cumberland House:

Imagine the effect on the five year old William. It was the custom of the fur brigades to stop short of an important post, to put on their finery and to resume the trip, singing lustily as they came into view of the post. Thus the young veteran of the great battles of Copenhagen, Trafalgar and New Orleans would have stepped from a boat into the unsophisticated world of the five year old boy. The event was enhanced by the arrival of Governor Williams. He had come to take charge of the district in the absence of Chief Factor Alexander Kennedy. William's father had gone on leave for a year to Britain. Regular Christian services and a Sunday school were begun on the

order of Governor Williams. Franklin approved of the measures and William Kennedy said later that the explorer conducted the first religious service that he could remember. Kennedy also said that Franklin taught him his first ABC's. (Shaw, 1970-1 p.).

In the introduction to the account of his adventures in the Canadian Arctic Bellot wrote:

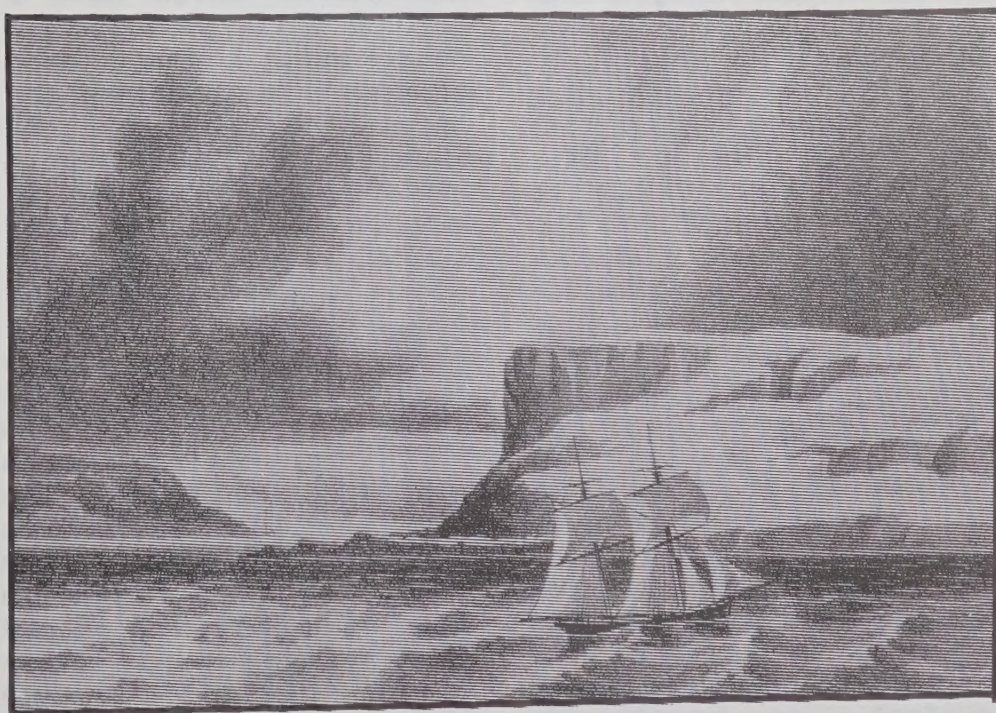
Before giving an account of operations which I did not direct, I wish it to be understood that to Captain Kennedy alone belong the praises due to the boldness and intelligence of the measures taken for the accomplishment of our mission; and that to his incredible activity and the constant care he took to secure the health and welfare of us all, we are indebted for having been able, under the protection of Providence, to do much in a little time, and to return every one of us ...

(Bellot, 1955, Vol. 1, p.93).

It is strange to think of a French naval officer speaking so highly of a man who had so little experience at sea. Despite this lack, Kennedy seems to have been able to impress the people he met including Sir Edward Belcher, who later remarked to Admiral Beaufort that "Kennedy is better than any of your Backs and Raes." (Captain G. Back and Dr. John Rae were two men who had travelled extensively in the Canadian Arctic.)

To understand Kennedy as a man it is perhaps best to return to the journal of Bellot:

Dear Mr. Kennedy! how kind and conscientious he is ... I am the man of his heart, he says, and he really wins my heart by his simple straight forwardness. Poor man! he does not belong to our time, and his perfectly primitive education has made him too good to lead the men of our day!



The Prince Albert - Homeward Bound from Beechy Island.





Process Of Building A Snow House.

(Bellot, 1955, Vol. 1, p.319) Vol. 1, p 93-4).

There are two other sides of Kennedy's character worth mentioning -- his piety and his rejection of liquor. The former is shown by Lady Franklin's decision to intersperse her instructions for Kennedy with prayers. As Bellot remarked, "I think I can guess their design: they (Lady Franklin and her niece) were aware that it was the only way of making the reading of the document attractive for him." (Bellot, 1955, Vol. 1 p. 135). Owing to Kennedy's opposition to liquor the only alcohol allowed on the ship was for medicinal purposes. This prohibition must have caused some dissent among the crew members, but as Bellot wrote: I do not hesitate to ascribe in great part to this wise measure the good conduct so steadily maintained by our crew, and the harmony that never ceased to reign in spite of the privations and the lack of comfort on board our vessel...(Bellot, 1855,

Another insight into Kennedy's character is illustrated by Bellot's comment on his French accent: Mr. Kennedy speaks Canadian French, that is to say, the French of more than a century ago, and I am glad to hear from time to time some of those old expressions which have a perfume quite peculiar to themselves. I was stupid enough to let him know the cause of my pleasure. He considers this privilege a defect, and begs me to correct it. (Bellot, 1855, Vol. 1, p. 138).

The importance of Kennedy's arctic expedition of 1851-2 has often been passed over. The voyage resulted in few new discoveries, but exploration was not its objective. Its sole purpose was to find out what had happened to Sir John Franklin. In an attempt to attain this goal, Kennedy and his men travelled extensively in mid-winter - a time when the earlier expeditions hardly left their quarters.

It was the first the of search expeditions to make use of native methods of winter overland travel. On their way north Kennedy stopped at Upernavik, Greenland, to buy dogs, sledges, and sealskin clothing for the travelling parties. They took 1 1/2 tons of pemmican and a specially constructed tin kayak with them, and they made snowshoes for the crew and used snowhouses when travelling. Kennedy made a remarkable overland journey, correctly recognized the existence of Bellot Strait.

After proceeding through Lancaster Sound the Prince Albert entered Prince Regent Inlet, and following instructions, Bellot put her into winter quarters at Batty Bay, east Somerset Island. Kennedy made several preparatory journeys to lay down caches for the main journey. Later, with five men, including Lieutenant Bellot, and five dogs, he made a splendid journey, covering over 1,000 miles in an area where game was extremely scarce. It was on this trip that Kennedy named the strait for his second-in-command, who did not agree that there was necessarily a strait as he had not travelled its whole length. After reaching the western end of the strait, Kennedy believed that Peel Sound was blocked to the north to Prince of Wales Island, which they crossed and returned to the east coast following it to Cape Walker before rounding Somerset Island to their winter quarters at Batty Bay. Had Kennedy followed his orders to continue south or southwest he might have found some remains of the Franklin expedition, all of whom had perished by this time, and he would have received the



recognition for his voyage which never came to him. The disagreement over Bellot Strait did not help his cause. Bellot was a professional naval officer and Kennedy had little sea-faring experience, and this brought into question all of Kennedy's actions.

Lady Franklin, however, did not lose faith in Kennedy and appointed him to command her third expedition. This trip also led to criticism of Kennedy. His orders were to sail his ship, the Isabel, to the Western Arctic entering through Bering Strait. This approach, combined with a very inferior crew, led to a disastrous voyage. As his ship sailed around South America the crew became mutinous. Kennedy therefore had them thrown into jail at the British naval station in Chile. Attempts to reconcile him with the crew failed and other sailors were not available as the British Pacific Fleet was in the process of preparing for the Crimean War. Kennedy therefore had to return to England without ever reaching the Arctic.

The Crimean War resulted in a halt to the sending out of new expeditions to the Arctic from England; Dr. Rae brought back news that some of Franklin's officers and men had died near the Great Fish River (Back River), and the search was passed to the Hudson's Bay Company. By this time most of the Canadian Archipelago south of Jones Sound had been explored and it was fair to say that "The ships were lost searching for the passage, but the passage was found in the search for the missing ships".

In 1856 William Kennedy returned to Canada and

settled in Red River with his wife, Eleanor Cripps, a kinswoman of Lady Franklin, whom he had married in England.

By Jane Rowley

#### References

Bellot, J.R. 1955. "The memoirs of Lieutenant Joseph René Bellot".

Kennedy, William. 1853. "Second voyage of the Prince Albert in search of Sir John Franklin".

Shaw, Edward C. 1970-1. "Captain William Kennedy -- an extraordinary Canadian". Trans. Hist. and Sci. Society of Manitoba, Ser. III, No.27, p. 7-24

## Events in Ontario

### FEDERATION OF ONTARIO NATURALISTS MEMBERSHIP TRIPS

#### A Snowshow Sojourn

The Canadian way to explore our winter season is on snowshoes. You will be visiting the Copeland Forest.  
Feb. 10

#### Bruce Winter Weekend

Come and enjoy a winter weekend on the Bruce Peninsula. This annual outing will be lead by Martin Parker.  
Feb. 15 - 17

### ONTARIO SCIENCE CENTRE

#### A Planet for the Taking

A 20 minute introduction to "Planet for the Taking". Followed by a pannel disussion with David Suzuki.  
Feb. 3 - 2:30pm.

#### Science Theatre

Presentations for the general public are given each Sunday in Theatre B, at 1:30 pm. and 3:30 pm.

#### Science and Crime

John Fowles will show how crime are solved using lasers and other high technology tools.  
Feb.10 - 1:30 pm. and 3:30 pm.

#### Lasers and Holograms

George Vanderkuur will show how holograms are built.  
Feb.17 - 1:30 pm. & 3:30 pm.

#### First Canadian Astronaut

How the first Canadian astronauts were trained.  
Mon., Tues., Thurs. and Fri.  
1:30 & 3:00 pm.  
On weekends and holidays  
11:00 a.m., 2:00 & 3:30 pm.  
Until Feb.15

#### Technion Science Fair

Some of Toronto's brightest students show their experiments and compete for a trip to the Weizman Institute in Israel as first prize.  
Feb.21 - 24

### ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

The Search for  
ExtraTerrestrial Life



An audio-visual pageant which explores the fascinating question of whether intelligent life had evolved beyond earth and how we might communicate with it.

McLaughlin Planetarium call: 978-8550

Jan.18 to April 21

### **The Wizard of ROM March Break**

A multi-leveled "show and tell:" exposition of every area of the museum for kids aged 3 to 12.

Events for March 11-15 will include:

- a dinosaur workshop
- a fossil identification clinic
- a ROM clue Game
- a 'munchkin' arts and science activity area.
- Children's films
- Special exhibits, demonstration and workshops.

Call: 978-8550

### **NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

#### **Professiona! Development Day**

One hundred Science teachers from Ottawa-Carleton will hold a professional development day at the museum

Feb.13

#### **Science Exhibit**

Students from the Carleton Roman Catholic School Board will exhibit their work in Science.

Feb.28 and Mar.1-2

### **On Display**

One of the 2 "popemobiles" which served Pope John-Paul II during his visit to Canada

One of 2 McLaughlin-Buicks which served His Majesty King Georg VI and Queen (Mother) Elizabeth during their visit to Canada in 1939.

### **All I Get Is Static**

A play about an important Canadian historical figure - Reginald Aubrey Fressenden.

### **MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

#### **Mineral Exploration Classes Free**

Introduction to Geology and Prospecting. A different subject will be covered nightly. Registration will take place in the evenings from 6:30 to 7:00 pm.

Call Ed Freeman 965-3127

Feb.25 - Mar.2 7-10:00 pm.



TVOntario

### **EUREKA!**

The Pulley

Feb.4 - 10:15 am.

### **THE AMATEUR NATURALIST**

Wetland Wilderness

Feb.4 - 7:00 pm.

### **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Polynesian Adventure**

Feb.5 - 8:00 pm.

### **THE NEW LITERACY An Introduction to Computers**

Operating System

Feb.5 - 11:00 pm.

Feb.6 - 7:00 am. R

### **ENERGY-EFFICIENT HOUSING**

New Homes: Heating Choice

Feb.6 - 10:00 pm.

### **FACES OF CULTURE Religion and Magic**

This program explores the possible synthesis of religion and science.

Feb.6 - 10:30 pm.

### **THE SCIENCE ALLIANCE Sound**

Feb.7 - 9:30 am.

Feb.8 - 2:00 pm.

### **AFRICA**

The Magnificent African Cake

Feb.8 - 9:00 pm.

### **THE ACADEMY OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY WITH JACK LIVESLEY**

Abortion

A Question of Life

Feb.9 - 11:30 am.

### **UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOUR**

Cognitive Development

Feb.9 - 12:30 pm.

### **THE NEW LITERACY An Introduction to Computers**

Feb.9 - 1:00 pm.

Feb.12 - 11:00 pm.

### **UNDERSTANDING THE EARTH**

Vertebrate Fossils

Feb.9 - 2:30 pm.



# **THE AMATEUR NATURALIST**

## **A Monarchy of Trees**

Feb.9 - 6:30 pm.

# **EUREKA!**

## **Molecules in Solids**

Feb.11 - 10:15 am.

# **THE AMATEUR NATURALIST**

## **A Monarch of Trees**

Feb.11 - 7:00 pm.

# **THE BLACK STILT**

## **A Bird Surrounded by Change**

A documentary of New Zealand's rarest wading bird, the black stilt.

Feb.11 - 8:00 pm.

# **NORTH AMERICA**

## **Growth of a Continent**

Patterns of Climate

Feb.12 - 1:15 pm.

# **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**

## **Four Americans**

A look at China that foreigners never see.

Feb.12 - 8:00 pm.

# **ENERGY - EFFICIENT HOUSING**

## **New Homes**

Letting the Sun Shine In

Feb.13 - 10:00 pm.

Feb.15 - 7:30 am. R

# **THE SCIENCE ALLIANCE**

## **Electricity**

Feb.14 - 9:30 am.

Feb.15 - 2:00 pm. R

# **CHALLENGE**

TVOntario presents five programs on subjects as diverse as divorce mediation, delayed language development, learning disabilities, early childhood pressures and community or-

chestras.

## **We Were Separate People**

Tells the story of four young people with learning disabilities.

Feb. 14. - 8:30 pm.

## **Pulling Flowers**

A drama, reflects the thoughts of a young mother who wants her child to be perfect, but realizes that she is pushing him to overachieve.

Feb.21 - 8:30 pm.

# **AFRICA**

## **The Rise of Nationalism**

Feb.15 - 9:00 pm.

# **UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOUR**

## **Personality Theory**

Feb.16 - 12:30 pm.

# **THE NEW LITERACY**

## **An Introduction to Computers**

Feb.16 - 1:00 pm.

# **UNDERSTANDING THE EARTH**

## **The Uneventful**

Day/Weathering and Erosion

Feb.16 - 2:30 pm.

# **THE AMATEUR NATURALIST**

## **Between Ice and Fire**

Feb.16 - 6:30 pm.

# **THE AMATEUR NATURALIST**

## **Between Ice and Fire**

Feb.18 - 7:00 pm.

# **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau**

Feb.19 - 8:00 pm.

# **THE NEW LITERACY**

## **An Introduction to Computers**

Feb.19 - 11:00 pm.

# **IT'S YOUR WORLD**

## **Australia 1**

Feb.20 - 11:45 am.

# **ENERGY**

## **Efficient Housing**

Feb.20 - 10:00 pm.

Feb.22 - 7:30 pm. R

# **THE SCIENCE ALLIANCE Light**

Feb.21 - 9:30 am.

# **AFRICA**

## **The Legacy**

Feb.22 - 9:00 pm.

# **UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOUR**

## **Personality Test**

Feb.23 - 12:30 pm.

# **THE NEW LITERACY**

## **An Introduction to Computers**

Feb.23 - 1:00 pm.

# **UNDERSTANDING THE EARTH**

Trail of the Ice Age Blues

Ice Ages: Rhyme and Reason

Feb.23 - 2:30 pm.

# **THE AMATEUR NATURALIST**

## **Living on the Edge**

Feb.23 - 6:30 pm.



## CTV

### ROMPER ROOM AND FRIENDS

#### Roadshows Takes To Television

Friends of Science's Roadshow teacher Ellen Mortfield will be demonstrating a variety of experiments on Romper Room and Friends.

#### The egg and bottle experiment

Feb.25

#### The fossil making experiment

Feb.26

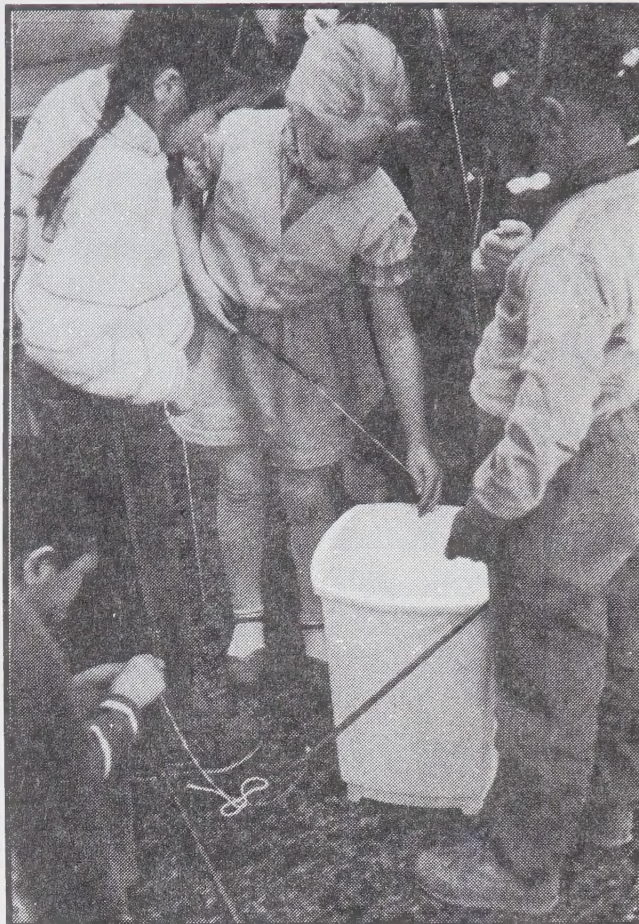
#### The cloud and rain making experiment

Feb.27.

#### The air and balloon experiment

Feb.28

Check your local T.V. listings for the time.



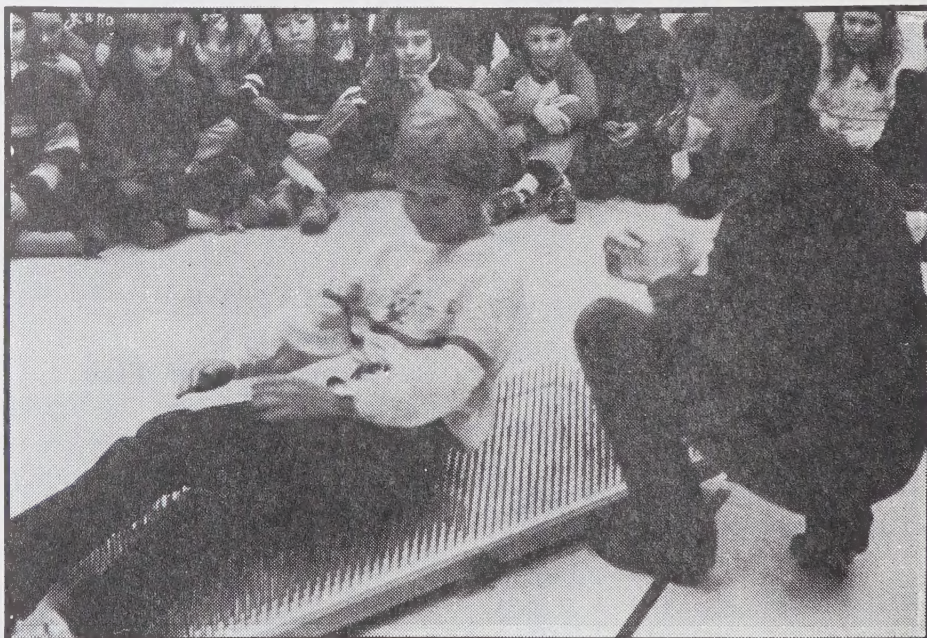
Roadshow group experiments with magnets.



### THE NATURE OF THINGS WITH DAVID SUZUKI

#### A Planet For The Taking

The idea of a human mandate to dominate and control the natural world has its roots deep in the traditions of Western culture. Host David Suzuki has traveled around the world to uncover the origins of this belief. His findings are brought together in a special eight-part series, to be telecast Wednesday evenings. Beginning Feb.6 - 8:00 pm.



Ellen Mortfield looks on as a student tests a bed of nails for comfort.



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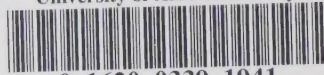
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